

THE NUR AFSEAN

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Editorial Notes.

The *Arya Messenger* has again thrown at the Bible fortress the old broken arrow of Cain's wife. He says there were in the world only two persons besides Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel. Cain killed Abel and went into the land of Nod, where he married a wife. Hence all men were not descended from Adam. Ergo, the Bible is all astray as to the facts of history!

But there is no reason to believe Cain to have been less than 125 years of age at the death of Abel. The record does not profess to catalogue the whole firmly of Adam and his descendants. It does say that "Adam begat sons and daughters" but none of these are named, except three sons, Cain, Abel and Seth. The reasonable inference from the narrative is that our first parents early began to replenish the earth, and that long before the tragic event of the death of Abel there were many inhabitants. A little arithmetic would help our friends to see that there should have been many thousands of people in the earth by the time of the death of Abel. It was from the anger of these that Cain feared, when he said that his brethren would slay him (Gen. iv. 14).

Now that the plague has confronted the hot winds, it is a good time to exploit the virtues of *Havan*. The hot weather will kill the bacteria and, to the superstitious Hindu, *havan* will

get the credit. The people of Lahore are said to be less zealous than the people of Amritsar, who have already spent Rs. 16,000 on *havan*. The *Arya Patrika* says; "This is a hopeful sign, indeed, of the awakening of the Hindus from their accustomed lethargy. We hope their zeal will not die away with the disappearance of plague. Let the people take vows to perform *havan* daily in their respective houses, the same as their forefathers used to do in ancient times, and there is every likelihood of healthier days returning to us." And this is reformation! Forward march and on to victory: but look backward as you go!

If the plague is one of mosquitoes, the performance of *havan* might accomplish a temporary good in driving them away. But India will have to vow to do something better than *havan*, if she is to become free from the Bubonic Plague. A better plan would be to reconstruct the homes,—not of the poor, but of the rich,—so as to admit the sunlight and fresh air, to adopt really modern methods of sanitation, to accept of scientific methods of quarantine, and especially to anticipate the advent of the plague by inoculation with the Haffkine serum.

If our educated young men are going to bolster up popular prejudice against the introduction of scientific methods of stamping out the plague, instead of becoming the leaders in the introduction of them, then we shall have another seige in the cold season, and Lahore and Amritsar are sure to

become centres of plague mortality. If such men will turn back to the superstitions of the past and, under a mistaken zeal for anything Indian as belonging to the elements of Patriotism, promote the revival of senseless ceremonies for the purification of the air, they will become responsible for untold misery and death.

We take the following words of Mr. Robert E. Speer from the May Number of *The Young Men of India*. The subject is the DETERIORATION OF CONSCIENCE:

"It is known that bicycle tires and other rubber articles deteriorate rapidly in this climate. And a good many consciences seem much like rubber in this regard. Possibly it is because they are stretched too often or too far, in the case of the consciences. Rubber lasts longer if it is stretched occasionally, for that is what it is made for. But to stretch conscience is to weaken it; and if the process is oft-repeated, to nullify it. The apostle speaks of a conscience 'seared with a hot iron.' There seem to be a good many also seared in a hot climate.

To lose the sensitiveness and grip of one's conscience is as serious as for a ship to lose her rudder. The only possible result must be temporary moral drifting and unless the defect is repaired, final moral ruin. It is to render oneself incapable of correct moral judgment. It is to stifle the voice of God in the soul. To all who discover in their own consciences a tendency to 'go bad,' as the Indian

expression has it, the only reasonable course is one of scrupulous care to hear and heed this inner moral voice until it is revived into full, normal action. Persistently to disobey conscience in any single particular, is to run the risk of complete moral shipwreck. "Had conscience strength as it has right; had it power as it has manifest authority, it would absolutely govern the world."

The readers of the Nur Afshan will be glad to learn of the advent of the Rev. G. L. Thakur Das to undertake the editorial work of the Urdu Nur Afshan. He is a gentleman of much experience in life and a well known author. To him we shall look for great things. We wish him a long and happy career as a missionary and editor in Ludhiana.

As heretofore the management of the *Nur Afshan* will remain in the hands of the Rev. E. M. Wherry D. D. who will also edit the English section of the paper. All correspondence and remittances of money should be addressed to him.

Question and Answer.

Question. Why should so much importance be attached to a single incident as is the case in Christian teaching with regard to the resurrection of Jesus?

Answer. We are not quite sure that we catch the drift of your question. Do you mean that you do not see why so much more importance is attached to the resurrection of Christ than to the thousands of incidents that occur daily in the life of other individuals? The answer to that is twofold. In the first place a resurrection from the dead is a unique fact; in the second place the person who rose was a unique person. It is not strange that one of the most remarkable incidents connected with the person who, at any rate, has influenced the world more than any other, should be regarded as more important than the daily incidents of my life and yours, or even than such events as the Battle of Trafalgar.

If you mean to ask why the Resurrection is treated as being of more importance than any other incident in the career of Jesus, the answer must be that it is not so treated. What is recognised as important is that career as a whole. The various incidents in it are natural and inevitable parts of it when once its fundamental nature is understood. And even if we begin to distinguish the parts and attribute comparative values to them, few would say that the Resurrection is of higher importance than the Incarnation and the Death.

Messa, Sanday and Headland in describing the emphasis which is placed upon the Resurrection by St. Paul, call attention to the following reasons.

(1). The Resurrection is the most conclusive proof of the Divinity of Christ. Acts xvii 31; Romans i. 4; 1 Corinthians xv. 14, 15.

(2). As proving the Divinity of Christ the Resurrection is also the most decisive proof of the atoning value of his Death. It showed clearly that he who died upon the cross was more than man (1 Corinthians xv. 17).

(3). The Resurrection placed upon the sacrifice of Calvary the stamp of God's approval; it showed that the sacrifice was accepted and that the cloud of Divine wrath had passed away. Romans 7: 10.

(4). The Resurrection of Christ is the strongest guarantee for the resurrection of the Christian (1 Corinthians xv. 20-23; 2 Corinthians iv. 14; Romans viii. 11; Colossians i. 18).

(5). It is the example and pledge of the beginning of a new life for the Christian now and here. By his union with Christ the Christian dies to sin and rises again to a new life of righteousness (Romans vi. 1-11).

The Inquirer.

Current Thought & Incident.

The Mysterious Portrait.

A STORY OF JAPAN.

In the little Japanese village of Yowewski, a looking-glass was an unheard of thing, and the girls did not even know what they looked like, except on hearing the description their lovers gave of their personal beauty.

Now it happened that a young Japanese one day picked up in the street a small pocket hand mirror.

It was, of course, the first time in his life that Kiki Tsum had ever gazed on such a thing. He looked at it, and to his intense astonishment saw the image of a brown face, with dark, intelligent eyes, and a look of awe-struck wonderment on its features.

"It is my sainted father. How could his portrait have come here! Is it, perhaps a warning of some kind!"

He folded the precious treasure up in his handkerchief and put it into a large pocket of his loose blouse. When he went home that night he hid it away carefully in a vase, as he did not know of any safer place. He said nothing of the adventure to his young wife, for he said, "Women are curious, and then too, sometimes they are given to talking."

For some days Kiki Tsum was in a great state of excitement. He was thinking of the portrait all the time, and at intervals he would leave his work and suddenly appear at home to take a look at his treasure.

Now, in Japan, as in other countries, mysterious actions and irregular proceedings of all kinds have to be explained to a wife. Lili Tsee did not understand why her husband kept appearing at all hours of the day. Certainly he kissed every time he came in. At first she was well satisfied with his explanation when he told her he only ran in for a moment to see her pretty face. She thought it was really quite natural on his part, but when, day after day, he appeared, and always with the same solemn expression, she began to wonder in her heart of hearts.

And so Lili Tsee fell to watching, and she noticed that he never went away until he had been alone in the little room at the back of the house. She hunted day after day to see if she could find some trace of anything in that little room which was at all unusual, but she found nothing.

One day, however, she happened to come in suddenly and saw her husband replacing the long blue vase. He made some excuse about its not looking very steady and appeared to be just setting at right, and Lili Tsee pretended that there was nothing uncommon in his putting the vase straight. The moment he had gone, though, she was up on a stool like lightning, and in a moment she had fished the looking-glass out of the vase. Then the terrible truth was clear. What was it she saw?

Why, the portrait of a woman: and she had believed that Kiki Tsum was so good and so fond and so true.

Suddenly a fit of anger seized her, and she gazed at the glass again. The same face looked at her, but she wondered how her husband could admire such a face, so wicked did the dark eyes look.

She had no heart for anything, and did not even make any attempt to pre-

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pare a meal for her husband. She just went on, nursing the portrait, and at the same time, her wrath. When later on Kiki Tsum arrived, he was surprised to find nothing ready for their evening meal, and no wife. He walked through to the other rooms.

"So this is the love you professed for me! This is the way in which you treat me, before we have even been married a year! What do you mean, Lili Tsee?"

"What do I mean? What do you mean? The idea of your keeping portraits in my rose leaf vase. Here take it and treasure it, for I do not want it, the wicked, wicked woman."

"I cannot understand."

"Oh, you can't? I can though, well enough. You like that hideous villainous-looking woman better than your own true wife. I would say nothing if she were even beautiful, but she has a vile face, a hideous face."

"Lili Tsee, what do you mean? That portrait is the living image of my poor dead father. I found it in the street the other day and put it into your vase for safety."

"Hear him! He wants to tell me that I do not know a woman's face from a man's."

Kiki Tsum was wild with indignation and the quarrel went on. The loud, angry words attracted the notice of a Japanese priest who was passing.

"My children," he said, putting his head in at the door, "Why this unseemly anger? Why this dispute?"

"Father, my wife is mad."

"All women are so, my son, more or less. You were wrong to expect perfection. It is no use to get angry, all wives are trials."

"My husband has a portrait of a woman hidden in my rose-leaf vase."

"I swear I have no portrait but that of my poor dead father."

"My children, my children, show it to me."

The priest took the glass and looked at it earnestly. He then bowed low before it and in an altered tone said, "My children, settle your quarrel and live peaceably together. You are both in the wrong. This portrait is a saintly and venerable priest. I know not how you could mistake so holy a face." He blessed the husband and wife, and then went away, carrying with him the glass which had wrought such mischief, to place it with the precious relics of the church.—*Christian Observer.*

Things Which Influence an Employer.

Manager of large institutions and business houses tell us that they reject a great many applications from boys and young men because of badly-spelled and carelessly-written letters. The handwriting and style of a letter are reliable indications of the character of the writer. A negligent writer, with careless sentences and inaccurate expressions, indicates an indifferent mind. The structure of the sentences show the texture of the mind which uses them. As a rule, a neatly-written letter, with well-constructed sentences containing concise and pointed expressions, indicates a careful and systematic mind. A loose-jointed letter shows carelessness in the choice of words to express a thought, and signifies a loosely-constructed mind which would be careless in everything. These may appear to be small things, but trifles make perfection.

An employer is influenced most by the little things in an application for a position. The little remarks dropped, the appearance, the dress, the collars, the cuffs, the nails and the hair—all these, which seem trifles, have proved stumbling-blocks to the advancement of many a youth. A careless expression in conversation, the use of slang, failure to look the superintendent or manager in the eye when talking with him, forgetfulness in removing one's hat, holding a cigarette, even an indication of the use of tobacco, or the sign of some other bad habit, gruffness, lack of politeness, and the hundred other seeming trifles, have barred the progress of many a youth.

Learning to spell correctly, to write a plain, straightforward letter, without superfluous words, correctly punctuated, and in good, terse English, will form a very important stepping-stone in the career of a youth—Success.

The Proper Way to Eat.

At a recent meeting of medical men Dr. F. A. Burrell spoke of the amount of mischief done by the very common habit of eating the meals rapidly, according to the farmer's motto of "Quick to eat and quick to work." Thorough mastication was of the utmost importance, and, of course, this pre-supposed a proper condition of the teeth. Gastric digestion is often weakened and much distress is caused by the ingestion of too much fluid with the food, particularly at the beginning of a meal. Another factor in causing dyspepsia was the habit of eating food in silence or without the mirth and good-fellowship so necessary to insure a nervous condition to the normal action of the digestive

organs. These little details might seem trite and unimportant, but it was the duty of the careful physician to instruct his patients in regard to them. The long-continued and free use of digestive agent served to make the digestive organs lazy and inactive.—*Medical R.*

Plant 1000 Years Old.

In the town of Hildersheim, Germany, is probably the most unique plant in the world. It is a rash bush 1,000 years old, and sprouts from its branches have realized fabulous sums. Some years ago a rich Englishman offered \$250,000 for this entire tree, but the sum was indignantly refused. This wonderful plant clings amid thickly grown moss against the side of the famous old church of St. Michael. It is claimed that it has bloomed perennially since the days of King Alfred, and this statement has never been disputed, for its record has been as carefully kept as the pedigree of the bluest blooded family in the kingdom. It is supposed to have been discovered by some mysterious means through the medium of King Louis Hildersheim, as far back as 1022.

A Marvelous Watch.

The watchmaking firm of Patik, Philippe and Company, of Geneva, says The Jewelers' Circular, has for sixty years been making a specialty of complicated timepieces, and a watch which they had on view at the Paris Exposition is regarded by them as their highest achievement.

This watch, which is of ordinary size, has a perpetual calendar indicating the days of the month, and the phases of the moon, and also possesses two separate small dials, upon which are shown automatically for a given latitude the time of the rising of the sun and the time of its setting. The difficulty overcome here was great, but what comprises the merit of the piece is that, in connection with the minute-hand, which shows the mean time (the time we use), it carries another hand which indicates the sun's time (the true time). This hand, moving from the centre, as do the hands showing the mean time, constantly travels with them and automatically places itself each day, at midnight, in the position it should occupy in order to indicate for that day the difference between the mean and true time. The variation is very great, being as much as fifteen minutes in one direction or the other, and but four times in a year do these two minute-hands correspond with a few seconds of each other. These dates are April 15, June 15, September 1, and December 25.

Telegrams.

London, May 10.

Reuter from Pretoria says that the total Boer losses in the drive southward against the Kroonstad-Lindley line mentioned on the 7th instant were 321.

Natives in the Vryheid district, whose kraals the Boers had burned, attacked a laager on the night of the 5th and killed upwards of thirty Boers, captured three, and recovered their looted cattle.

A relief steamer has brought to Fort de France 450 rescued to search for further survivors.

Eye-witnesses say that the volcano suddenly exploded and a tempest of steam and mud was poured on St. Pierre, immediately followed by a whirlwind of fire and shower of rocks lasting a quarter of an hour. The whole town was instantly ablaze. Hot mud and cinders continue falling throughout Martinique.

The cruiser *Suchet's* rescues included fourteen of the crew of the British steamer *Roraima*.

The American Senate passed a Bill appropriating one hundred thousand dollars for the relief of the sufferers at Martinique, whither the American warships *Cincinnati* and *Dixie* have been ordered. The British Cruiser *Indefatigable* has gone to St. Vincent.

London, May 10.

The rebels bombarded Nanning-fu on the 27th April with a modern field gun, killing 350 inhabitants, and afterwards withdrew to the hills.

London, May 12.

Reuter's correspondent at Pretoria, writing on the 19th ultimo, says that the Boer delegates first put forward a demand for independence in the series of terms upon which they would advise the burghers to surrender. The difficulty about compensation for burned farms and Cape rebels was not insuperable, but the crux was the date of granting representative Government. Finally the Boers declared that they must consult the commandoes, as they were not possessed of full powers.

Allahabad, May 13.

A special cable to the *Pioneer*, dated London, 22th May, says:—

It now transpires that the Boer delegates at Pretoria first proposed that the Republics should concede the demands regarding franchise monopolies and the like made by the British before the war. They next asked that they should be allowed to consult their friends in Europe. Being advised that unless they had something more serious to propose, the negotiations had better terminate, they then asked for the armistice. This was refused, but instead Lord Kitchener conceded immunity from attack while they consulted the commandoes.

London, May 12.

Despatches from St. Thomas state that it is believed 500 persons have perished at St. Vincent.

It is reported that Fort de France is threatened. Canoes and small boats crowded with destitute refugees are arriving at

Dominica from the windward side of Martinique. Many have been drowned in crossing.

The misery and terror at Martinique and St. Vincent are unspeakable. The whole face of the country is constantly changing. Rivers are drying and others overflowing. Great scarcity of food prevails, and 50,000 are homeless in Martinique. The northern side of St. Vincent is ablaze and unapproachable.

London, May 12.

M. Severo's airship made an ascent at Paris this morning and exploded. Both aeronauts were killed.

Another caravan of 28,000 people watered at a well at Aspan, and afterwards a curious sickness attacked the pilgrims, who, discovering three Greeks among them, suspected them of poisoning the water and killed them. A thousand pilgrims died in a few hours, and deaths occurred for six days afterward.

Bombay, May 12.

The Maharaja of Jaipur left Bombay to-day on the steamer *Olympa* to attend the Coronation. A great crowd of natives bade him farewell. His Highness performed *puja* on the steps of the bunder, and eleven Brahmins specially called from Jaipur went through the ceremony to propitiate the sea whilst Marathi books proving that sea voyages are not contrary to the religion were distributed. A salute was fired from H. M. S. *Pemone*.

London, May 13.

Medical inspections show that the victims at Martinique died from instant suffocation due to poisonous gases.

An account of a visit paid to the ruins of St. Pierre on Sunday states that the island was hidden behind a dense haze. Quantities of wreckage were in the harbour, and numbers of corpses were floating about with gulls and sharks devouring them. There were alternate blasts of hot and ice-cold winds, with rain. The city is still burning, and landing is very difficult. The streets are hardly traceable. Heaps of corpses were lying about, mostly face downwards.

The King of Italy has given £1,000 to the sufferers in Martinique.

Danish and French cruisers picked up 3,000 refugees along the coast, mostly horribly burned, and conveyed them to Fort de France.

The latest unofficial news from St. Vincent states that 1,600 perished. The sole survivors at St. Pierre were the thirty rescued by the cruiser *Suchet*, and eighteen of them have died and eight are dying.

Some horses on the outskirts of St. Pierre were intact, but the inmates were dead.

The *Times* publishes a telegram which states that St. Pierre was destroyed in the twinkling of an eye. A whirlwind of steam, boiling mud and fire swept the city and roadstead. The streets are paved with the dead.

London, May 13.

Lord Lansdowne, replying to Lord Lamington in the House of Lords with reference to the continued occupation of Chantabun, explained the French allegations regarding Siam's non-fulfilment of the convention, and said that it was impos-

sible for Great Britain to decide which was right. The occasion was not one for representation, but His Majesty's Government would rejoice to see the difficulties in that quarter composed and Chantabun restored to its legitimate owner.

Calcutta, May 14.

The *Englishman* publishes the following cable dated London May 14:—

There is now every reason to hope that the peace negotiations are advancing rapidly to a successful issue. The final discussion of the terms of surrender was to have taken place at Vereeniging on May 25, but already the enemy's leaders are assembling at that rendezvous. Generals Wessels and Louis Botha and several others passed Harrismith on Monday.

The prospects of peace are regarded most hopefully here.

London, May 14.

Lord Kitchener wires that the week's captures of Boers amount to 817, including 360 taken in General Ian Hamilton's drive, and reducing De La Rey's forces by 860 in two months.

Lord Kitchener has arranged that the conference at Vereeniging shall include representatives from all bodies of Boers in the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal, and be consequently thoroughly representative. The Boers at the meeting will decide the terms they intend to submit to Lord Kitchener, and will depute delegates to proceed to Pretoria with the same.

London, May 14.

It is now estimated that the deaths at St. Vincent number 2,000, mostly Caribs.

Details of the calamity are too harrowing to describe. The neighbouring British colonies are assisting generously. The eruption is now moderating. The Governor estimates that two million tons of dust have fallen on Barbados.

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